



AGENCY-WIDE
SHARED SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20224

JAN 23 2004

Interested Vendors:

The Department of the Treasury is pleased to release this Request for Comment (RFC) on draft solicitation documents for the Treasury Communications Enterprise (TCE). It is envisioned that TCE will provide a single, seamless, department-wide, wide-area network through the use of a performance-based, contractor-managed service. The objective for TCE is to provide scalable, world-class, customer-focused services in support of the Department and individual bureaus. With this letter, we are issuing draft solicitation documents for the statement of work (SOW), contract pricing, performance requirements, proposal instructions and evaluation criteria.

An important factor for the Government is the cost of transition. It is the Government's desire to have the costs of transition included in the monthly recurring cost of service. Additionally, the Government seeks industry comment on a number of issues.

1. The Government has endeavored to create requirements that provide the minimum essential services required for TCE to obtain the most cost-effective, performance-based solution. We seek feedback on the relative financial impact of major cost drivers.
2. The pricing structure is intended to provide a relatively simple method for ordering services at a fixed price. The government seeks comment on the proposed pricing structure, including any unintended adverse cost impacts, recommendations on how we can ensure that contract prices remain competitive and performance-based over time, and how we can improve the ability to accommodate technology and contract changes over time.
3. The government intends to make available existing government-owned equipment. The equipment includes various sizes of CPE routers, network switches (such as ATM switches), NOC workstations, and similar gear. The equipment is used in the current network environment; however, transition will require the successful installation of service at a site without service disruption. We seek feedback on your desired use of the equipment through either a traditional Government-furnished-equipment scenario or an exchange sale arrangement in which title would pass to the vendor in exchange for exclusive use of the contractor-owned equipment during the contract term. Additionally, please describe any cost or performance impact (positive or negative) that may result.
4. We seek feedback on any cost impact of a decentralized (by Bureau) versus a centralized (program management office) ordering and billing process. Recognizing that the contractor has a standard invoice format and the Government has specific requirements mandated by the Prompt Payment Act, the Government requests comments that will produce cost savings for a billing process that currently includes:
 - A single Government invoice input for the start of the "prompt payment period,"
 - Payment discounts for faster payment than the standard Government 30-day period,
 - A billing disputes framework (both on business and technical levels), and

- Existing administrative systems that will support Government invoice submission and payment tracking.
- 5. At C.3.2.8, the current SOW provides for the maintenance and operation of the Treasury Directory System. We request your feedback on the level of detail required to propose this support and for providing a potential replacement solution.
- 6. Based on the current proposal requirements, please advise on recommended proposal page limitations.

If vendors require additional information in order to respond to the requirements of the SOW, those information items should be identified in their response to this RFC.

The Government requests your comments by 2:00 P.M., February 6, 2004. We intend to issue the final solicitation on or about March 1, 2004 with proposals due on or about April 30, 2004. The schedule for contract award is September 2004 with transition completed no later than September 27, 2005.

Vendor comments are limited to a total of 20 single sided pages at no less than 11 point font. The 20 page limit shall be comprised of no more than 10 total pages for responses to the aforementioned issues and 10 total pages for comments on the solicitation documents using the Attachment 1 template.

Vendors are cautioned that the solicitation documents will continue to undergo refinement and may change significantly before release of the final solicitation.

Comments may be submitted via email to awss.tce@irs.gov. If you have any questions pertaining to this letter, please contact the undersigned at (202) 283-1283.

Sincerely,



William J. Thoreen
Contracting Officer